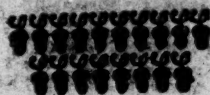


A
P L E A
F O R
Honest Dealing
Against all
INJUSTICE
A N D
IN J U R Y.



L O N D O N :

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**A
P L E A**

F O R

Honest Dealing.

Against all

INJUSTICE and INJURY:

MAN being by his Creation made a Creature of a more dignified and excellent Nature than other Creatures; Endowed with that Reason and Understanding with which the other Creatures, which it pleased the Creator (in subserviency to the Humane Nature, and in

order to the manifestation of his own glory) not in like manner to Endow: having created Man in a similitude to himself, with the very Impression of his Nature, gave him Laws for the Rule of his Practice; which said Laws, as respecting Moral Behaviour, are by the Law of Nature imprinted on the Minds of Men, and engraven with indelible Characters on the Consciences of all Men: insomuch that a most vitiated Practice can hardly blot out, but still remains if not the practice of Justice and Righteousness, yet the secret approbation of it even in the minds of the most corrupted Men; yea, our Nature would be the greatest enducement to all fair, just and honest dealing, if we did not stifle and smother the Dictates thereof, though we, through the depravity of our nature, are fallen from our chiefest good; yet if we suppress not even our own Natures, there yet remains the legible Characters of Justice and honest dealing written thereon, and unless we would wilfully raze them out for the sake of our impious Lusts and Passions, they will plainly remain.

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But not only the light of Nature, but also the light of the written Law of God, evinceth that Men ought to do Justice and Right, and that by Injury and Oppression, Persons, Families, Nations, become miserable and desolate; yea, that it is inconsistent with the Nature, with Piety, with Humanity, the proof whereof is apparent in the following *Sections*.

§. 1. Against doing Injustice, or Oppressing our Neighbours, we have an eminent Pattern even from the spotless Lives of the *Heathens*, with respect to Moral Honesty, which said Virtue did with most splendid Magnificence shine forth in several of them who had no greater discoveries than what were afforded by the light of nature, yet how did that great Law of nature rule in their Hearts, not to wrong their *Neighbours*, but to deal justly with one another: *Christianity* doth not only instruct us in this Lesson, but *Nature* too: doing justly and honestly is not good with respect to the future World only, but likewise for the present: it is the best way of living,

living, now since the *Heathens*, who were only guided by the Principles of Nature, who had not those Divine Revelations we have, have been so remarkable in their Morals; let them not shame us Christians, as if Christianity licens'd Men to be injurious and oppressing: and let us take heed that they do not rise up against us, and condemn us another Day.

§. 2. For Men to do Injustice or Oppress their *Neighbour*, or do any other Injury, is against the Law of nature, which flows forth to the Sons of Men from the eternal Law of God, the Law of nature being a copying out of the eternal Law, and the imprinting it upon the Breast of a rational Being; that eternal Law was as in a manner incarnated in the Law of nature: so that the Law of nature doth strictly oblige and tye us to the due observance thereof, as it immediately flows from the eternal Law of God, and thereby has the right of primogeniture of all Laws: and all the good and wholsom Laws in the World are but *Idea's* and Representations
of

of it, and concur with that Law of nature, it is essential to a rational Creature, who being endowed with reason and understanding, he it is suitable and connatural to it to be regulated by a Law: Man being made a free Agent and qualified with rational Faculties, and thereby rendered capable of a Law, and suitable unto it; when therefore he breaks this Law of nature, by injuring others, Oh how doth he even strike at his own Being! How doth he offer violence to his own Nature! How doth he endeavour to blot out those indelible Characters of Justice and Honesty which are imprinted in the Humane nature!

S. 3. Injuring and oppressing Men doth unavoidably retort guilt upon the Consciences of the injurious; Conscience is the natural Pulse of the Soul, and the impartial Judge of Men's Actions, it is a close Companion, it is an inward Light which will discover a Man to himself: the *Apostle* in *Rom. 2. 14, 15.* felt the *Heathen* Pulse thus beating, it sometimes accusing, and sometimes excusing.

excusing them ; Humane Laws bind Men to do justly, but if they do not, this is a Divine Serjeant that will arrest the person offending ; if Men do not justly, it will not act flatteringly, for it's God's Vice-Gerent in the Soul of a Man : thus it arrested *Cain*, and threw him in the Prison of Trouble and Confusion, for the Blood of his righteous Brother *Abel* ; thus also *Lamech* ; and of all Troubles it is most intolerable, for says the Wise Man, *A wounded Spirit, who can bear !* It molests the most inward Faculties, and haunteth the secret Cogitations, filling the Mind with Fear and Confusion, as *Cain I shall be a Vagabond, and whosoever meeteth me, will slay me.* Let us therefore, as we would avoid an accusing, troubling and tormenting Conscience, avoid injuring and wronging any Men, for Conscience will prosecute us, for breaking the Law of God and Nature.

§. 4. To injure, wrong, or oppress Men, renders them incapable of that calmness, quietude, and peaceableness, which is implied

implied in the light of Nature and right reason, if men were more tun'd and regulated by reason, there would be more harmony in the World, and nor that discord that is too common therein. Man by Nature is a sociable Creature, and this light of Reason is a sociable light, this *Candle of the Lord* would give forth its light purely and clearly, if mens interests and passions did not almost extinguish it.

§. 5 To injure and wrong others, as it renders men incapable of the quietude which is implied in the Light of Nature, it also puts out the pleasant light of our own Reason, it is to cast away from ourselves the good he has given us, *All Light is pleasant*; yea, it is even the very smile of Nature, and the varnish of the Creation. Oh how pleasant is it to behold the Lamp of Reason! how pleasant to behold an intellectual Sun! it is a pleasure that respects the Soul of man, and so it is of a far higher and more noble extract than all the pleasures of sense. But oh how dolorous is it when extinguish'd and aim'd to be wronged.

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and undone by our injustice and oppression.

§. 6. To act injuriously to others is even against the Documents of the Heathens, not only in so doing, do we fall short of their *Examples*, but also of their *Documents*, as *Soerates*, *Diogenes*, *Aristotle*, *Plato*, and many others: Now if these by the *Light of Nature* attained to great Measures of Moral behaviour, if they walked, lived, and have left behind them *Documents* for honest living; if we fall short of them, though *We are professed Christians*, if yet we are so far from regarding the Lesson of Justice and Honesty, as commanded in the *Word of God*, and also as pressed upon us even by *Heathens* themselves, of what sore *Condemnation* shall we be thought worthy?

§. 7. To injure and wrong others, is to walk contrary to the *light of our Reason*, which is a *light for the feet*, and a *Lantern for the Paths*, which is the leading and guiding power of the Soul, Reason is that

that which carries a *Torch* before the *Will*, and also it is an *Eye* for the *blind*, for else in vain would it be to *light up a Candle* for a *blind faculty* to see withal; now for men to abuse this *Gift* of God, to abuse the light of *Reason*, to sin against their *Consciences* and knowledge, is without *Repentance*, the way to inevitable *Ruin*.

§. 8. To injure or wrong others, as it is contrary to the *Law* of *Nature*, and *Right Reason*: so also to the revealed *Law* of God in the *Scriptures*, which is sufficiently to be proved therefrom, 1 *Thess.* 4. 6. *That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such.* If we are *Christians* we must submit unto the *Rule* of that *Word* of God we pretend to believe or cease to profess *Christianity*; for if we must needs make the *World* believe that we serve God, and trust in him, when our practice loudly proclaimes *Defiance* to him by breach of his *Commandments*, though we may make our boast of the *Law*, yet by breaking the law, do we dishonour God.

§. 9. To injure and wrong others is a crime of a most hainous and dreadful nature and consideration in that it brings the vindictive Righteousness of God upon us in this *World* as well as in another, even Scripture and nature it self will require us to look for the same Measure from God and men, either in this *World* or the other, where with we mete unto others; He that prepares ruin for another must reasonably expect to partake of destruction himself, a guilty conscience must need haunt the injurious by suggesting to them the Expectation of suffering worse things themselves than they impole upon their Neighbours, and so indeed one under such a Character may rightly fear, for it is the peculiar attribute of Almighty God, *the Lord is the avenger of all such, and vengeance is mine, and the God to whom vengeance belongeth, and He will repay it,* hence how promptly did the conscious Minds of *Josephs* Brethren acquit God for a Just retribution upon themselves, in revenging their carriage towards their Brother when they said, *We are verily guilty,*
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concerning our Brother, in that we saw the anguish of his Soul, when he besought us and we would not hear : therefore is this distress come upon us ; in like Manner also did the Conscience of *Adonibezek* recoil upon him, when his Thumbs and great Toes were cut off, *Seventy Kings* saith he, having their Thumbs and great Toes cut off, gathered their Meat under my table as I have done, so would hath requited me. Instances of this nature which stand register'd in Scripture for our Ensamble are various : let us consider the Woes which are in Scripture denounced against the injurious, and fear and not do so wickedly ! He made a Pit, and digged it, Saith the Psalmist in the 7th Psalm, where speaking of the wicked man (and is fallen into the Ditch which he made; his mischief shall return upon his own Head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own Pate ;) And if the injurious and wrongers of others would know what They must expect, let them hear what the Wiseman saith in *Prov.* 1. 21. They shall eat of the Fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices, and again in the 5th Chapter, His own iniquities

quitie shall take the wicked Himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his Sins,)
 Let also the injurious consider the Prophet *Isaiabs* Wo, viz, "Wo to thee that spoilest,
 "and thou wast not spoiled; and dealest
 "Treacherously, and they dealt not Treach-
 "erously with thee: when thou shalt cease
 "to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; and when
 "thou shalt make an end to deal Treacher-
 "ously, They shall deal Treacherously with
 "thee. Nay most formidable is the threatening
 in *Micah* viz, "Then shall they cry unto
 "the Lord, but he will not hear them; He
 "will even hide his Face from them at that
 "time, as they have behaved themselves ill
 "in their doings. Yea Further let us remark
 that most observable passage of our blessed
 Saviour; "With what Measure you mete,
 "it shall be Measured to you again. But in
 short let that general Exhortation of St.
Paul to the *Galatians*, be considered viz.
 "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for
 "whatsoever a Man soweth, that shall he
 "also reap. It is a common Proverb *Prout*
Sementem Feceris, ita & Metes: as you sow
 you shall reap, They that plow iniquity
 and

and wickedness, reap the same, But to him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward; He that acteth unjustly to man shall find severe Justice from God, He that ruineth his Neighbour shall find ruin for his portion, He that oppresseth others has no warrant to believe but that he shall come to confusion himself, for saith the Scripture, *He shall have Judgment without Mercy that hath shew'd no Mercy*; What Mercy find we in the Parable of *Dives* and *Lazarus* had *Dives* for his Cruelty, and injustice to poor *Lazarus*, for it is a breach of Justice when God hath given a man riches and wealth for that man to shew no Mercy to the poor and needy, how then by injustice do we prepare Scourges for our selves and pull divine vengeance in both *Worlds* upon our own Pates? For since God is a God of Righteousness and his Justice is his essential attribute, how can we think, but that the *Judge of the whole Earth will do right*, and if men will break through all the bonds of Equity and Justice to wrong others, and to divest them of their due right, how can it be expected but that God will plead the cause of the oppressed, and return the violence of the oppressor upon his own head. Nay this sin of injustice is so displeasing to God, that often it brings Plagues and Miseryes upon a Community, and is attended with national ruin, and even seldom in this *World* passeth without the signal tokens of Divine vengeance and displeasure.

§. 10. To injure and wrong others, doth most wretch-

wretchedly displease and reject that great Commandment *viz*, to love our Neighbour as our self. We suppose hereby that every man has an entire love and regard to himself, the obligation of loving his Neighbour is here grounded on love to himself, and from this Principle of self-love is it that a man is desirous not to receive wrong from others, but to desire right; here therefore it is made the pattern and Measure of his demeanour towards others. We certainly need not a precept to injoyn upon us the love of our selves, since it is a principle which nature teaches, this appears even from that instinct of nature which we find to be in sensitive as well as rational creatures, *viz* that self-love or desire of their own preservation and good, and thereupon an inclination and appetite towards what is good, suitable and convenient with their nature, attended with an aversion and declining what is otherwise. We read in holy writ that no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it: No man in his right wits, no man unless he were mad and alienated and estranged from himself, but would embrace the common principles of self-love. But what a sad consideration is it whereas man is by the obligation of the principles of nature engaged to self-love, yet how generally do we see men even forgo those very principles and forsake that very instinct of nature (even to the denying of that nature wherewith *God* hath invested them, and to the disgrace of the principles of that nature wherewith they are endowed) which nature as humane

humane imports humanity ; and how is it possible to believe that there is humanity if any man hates and injures his Neighbour ; what is more contradictory to the rules and Impressions of reason on the faculties of reasonable Souls ? Nay what can we say of injurious persons but that they are Enemies to nature, that they forsake the principles of Reason, and offer violence to themselves, and renounce the commands of God, and extinguish (as much as they can) the Light of nature, and must reasonably expect that Just doom that is thundred forth in the menaces of Scripture against such.

§. 11. Men ought by no means to wrong or injure others, for we were all out of the same stock, and equal by nature, though as to our states and conditions therein there is a disparity, yet it is no otherwise than Figures of the same denomination set in different places: one is a unit, another a ten, another an hundred : We are all of us, whether High or Low, yet descended from one Common Parent: We are of the same Mould, and were all derived from the Dust, and shall return unto the same again ; We all owe our being and original to the God of us all ; in him the Poor man as well as the rich doth *live and move, and hath his being*; hence may rationally be inferred that since we are thus equal by nature, and received our being from God, and the Preservation of that being is dayly given us of God, then *Mal. 2. 10. saith the Prophet, Have we not all one Father ? Hath not one*
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God created us? Why do we deal Treacherously every man against his Brother? It is altogether unaccountable for any man to wrong another, and appears greatly evil and base by reason of that consanguinity of nature whereby all men are linked together in the relation they stand each to other as fellow creatures; as being created by the same God, and as fellow Brethren, being preferred and maintained by the same paternal care and protection. This very consideration had so great an influence upon Job, that in his afflictions, We may see his appeal from having committed injury or injustice when he said, If I did despise the cause of my Man-servant, or of my Maid-servant, when they contended with me, what then shall I do when God riseth up? And when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? Did not he that made me in the womb make him? And did not one fashion us in the womb? We are made by the same God but not to undo and wrong one another: pathetick to this purpose is that of Paul in the Acts; God that made the World, and all things therein, hath made of one blood all Nations of men for to dwell on the face of the Earth, there is then very great reason that we should so carry our selves towards others, as we would desire from them, in as much as we are all partakers of the same nature, joynt possessors of the same Earth, branches sprouting out from one and the same stock. We see it plainly in Lions, Wolves, Bears and the most ravenous and fierce Bruits, this instinct of nature, w^{ch}, that they devour not one another, for we see every Beast loveth his like

like and not devour Creatures of the same kind with themselves, therefore if not from a more rational ground and more noble and excellent Principles men forbear not to injure and devour one another, yet let this Example of that instinct of nature which is even in brutes prevail upon men not to act that which is worse than brutish; for if those Savage creatures to which every one is Obnoxious to danger and destruction if caught in their reach and power, yet agree with each other: then Man whose nature is excellent, should if from no other tie and obligation, not devour and wrong his fellow creature, still should even the communion and Participation of the same Nature be sufficient, since it is so in the very Savage brutes. And if any man wrong and injure others they may justly be divested of the title of Humane and justly called Diabolical and worse than brutish.

§. 12. Let any injurious oppressing man consider, That it is very possible he may be in the same Case with the person whom he so injures and abuses: it may very probably be his own fate and fate. Salvable to this is the passage of Holy writ in *Isaiah*, where the Prophet saith, *As with the People, so with the Priest; as with the Prince; as with the Servant; so with his Master; as with the Maid, so with her Mistress; as with the Buyer, so with the Seller; as with the Lender, so with the Borrower; as with the taker of Usury, so with the Giver of Usury to him*; That which happens to one may happen to another, for *all are Men*. We are partakers together of the same Nature,

We are intient to the same fate with others ; and though one be lifted up and prosperous, he may nevertheless become dejected and distressed, *Therefore let him that thinketh he standeth* (as saith the Apostle) *take heed lest he fall,* and not say with vain confidence *that in his Prosperity he shall never be moved,* which though uttered by a holy man, yet it was in repentance for that his vain and mistaken confidence, therefore excellent is the exhortation of the Author to the *Hebrews, Remember* (saith he) *Them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity; as being your selves also in the body;* Whilst we are in the body we lye Obnoxious to the same afflictions with others, and though We may not yet feel them, yet we have not the least assurance that we shall not, but if we be the occasion of afflictions and sorrow to others by injury and oppression, let us Remember and take this for a warning piece that we are all exposed to Variety of Changes in the *World,* and may likely Exchange our state and condition with other men, and therefore if we would not be oppressed and injured, we should forbear it to others, and follow that Spirit of Sympathy and Compassion to which the Apostle Exhorteth the *Romans, Rejoyce therefore with them that Rejoyce, and Weep with them that Weep;* Which is a natural Principle of Sympathy and Compassion with others, we being clothed with the same flesh and frailty and so liable to the same affliction and adversity with others.

9. 13. Let us not injure, wrong or oppress others in any Manner, in consideration of our Saviours Golden Rule of all morality and just and honest dealing, when he said, *Whatsoever ye would that Men should do unto you, do unto them likewise; this is the Law and the Prophets;* this Rule of honesty and justice is that which the Law and Prophets greatly call for, it is a fruitful Epitome of divers precepts delivered in the Law and the Prophets: Now we have Moses and the Prophets, and if we will not heed them, let us expect Dives doom and fate, let the injurers oppressors of their Neighbours expect that place of Torment as a due recompence of their injustice.

It was one end of our Saviours coming into the World, to fulfill the Law, he came not to abrogate or take away the binding Power and Authority of the Law and Prophets, but to fulfill their Prescription and Rules, so that he establisheth his precepts by them, for saith he, "Think not, that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill: Now the Moral Law or the Law prescribing rules for Just and Honest living, and righteous dealing between Man and Man, is but a revival of the Law of Nature, which said law of nature depends on eternal and never failing principles and rules of Equity and Justice; and this our Saviour was so far from rendring null and void as that he has ratified it, the Laws and Prophets being as authentick as ever, and do strictly oblige us to those Laws, which are built on eternal principles of Equity,

quity, and so do as virtually oblige us as ever they did the *Jews*, though those *Laws* which respected their polity in Church and state, as they only respected time and place, and a certain People had a binding power and no further, unless determined according to those mutable Circumstances, but the moral law of Justice and Equity is ever obliging, not only from the light of nature but divine Revelation, as in the forecited phrase of our Blessed Saviour, and in his reference to the *Law and the Prophets*. And in Scripture we find *Abraham* preferring the voice of *Moses and the Prophets*, even before one rising from the Dead, for the warning of the Living, *If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the Dead*; if we will have no respect for the *Law and the Prophets*, we are Atheists, if we will pretend to reverence those holy writings, and yet practice Oppression and injury to our Neighbours we are perfect Hypocrites, and what is the portion of the Hypocrite *but weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth*? Our blessed Saviour when he urgeth this Golden Rule, he backs it with divine Authority and infallible power, *viz.* the Scriptures which are the *Law and the Prophets*, which bind us to obedience thereof, as they are the peremptory Commands and injunctions of our Creatour, and the Rule of our Faith and manners, which if we reject, *We reject the Council of God against our selves*, and without repentance shall suffer the revenging wrath of God for ever for contempt of and disobedience unto his Commandments.

§. 12. By acting injustice and oppression against others, we do most injury, and hurt to ourselves; injustice is a kind of intestine, civil sedition and War in the Soul, causing an unjust oppressor to fight against himself, in Troubling, Vexing and Tormenting himself. An Heathen writer endeavouring to confute this assertion, saying, *It is impossible for a man to do injury to himself, for (saith he) all injury must be acted against another*; But the same Author forgetting that argument at the latter end of his Book, asserted "Whoever doth wrong or injustice to another, wrongeth himself, and in offering injury to another, doth himself wrong, in that he is the cause why himself transgresseth the Laws. The very Law of nature will declare him who wrongeth the dictates thereof to be the cause of his own evil, and wrong his own nature, but he who injureth his Neighbour wrongs the very dictates of nature; he therefore who causeth himself to act injuriously transgresseth the Law of his own nature, and whosoever doth offer violence to his own nature, can by no means be otherwise than an enemy to himself.

§. 13. To do injustice and injury is contrary to the Divine president in Scripture of Gods Judicial wayes of proceeding, though *Sodoms* sins were sins of the deepest stain; though their pollutions were the most obscene and filthy which ever were committed by a rebellious and wicked People; yet when God intended to proceed against them in a Judicial way, how doth he comply with the Law of nature; he would neither condemn nor execute
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before he had not only cleared his Justice in himself, or to his *Angels*; but also to *Abraham*, *Lot* and other spectators, that he might be justified in his dealings, and clear when he judgeth; he would and did, go down to hear and see, in order to a Judicial proceeding against them. Now if God would not proceed against a wicked abominable *Sodom*, but clear his Justice and infinitely condescend thus to put his actions on mans Judgment, thus strictly to observe the Law of nature; Oh how greatly do these demerit the divine vengeance without any mixture of Mercy, which arbitrarily refuse to obey all rule of Equity, and Justice, to be regulated by no Laws nor injunctions of Right, that say *Stat pro ratione voluntas*. or rather *voluptas*.

§. 16. To do injustice and wrong to others renders those persons most like and conformable to the Image of the Devil, *Who goeth about like a roaring Lyon seeking whom he may devour*; injurious persons have the very Idea and impression of the diabolical nature, how very Suitable are their natures which consist in devouring others, saith our blessed Saviour to the Malignant *Jews*, *Ye are of your Father the Devil, and the lusts of your Father ye will do, he was a Lyar from the beginning*, he was a defrauder, beguiler, and an injurious one, he at first wronged man of his innocence, he beguiled man of his felicity, and he injureth him of his Salvation, he is the Father of lyes, and fraud, beguiling, and injury; and those who are injurious

jurious to others, are not exempted from being Children of the Devil, for they bear the similitude of the diabolical natures, and it may be as truly said of them, as it was of Old, *Adam, He Begat a Son in his own likeness.* So the Devil hath these Children in his own likeness, these are his first born, these are the very heirs of darkness, these will be the hottest Firebrands of Hell without repentance; these are the Devils Drudges, full fraught with *Malice, Malignity, Envy, Hatred,* and all the *unfruitful works of Darkness*; for whom is, with the fallen Angels, *reserved the blackness of Darkness for ever.*

§. 17. For men to act injuriously or oppressingly, is the certain way to bring ruin on their Families, and on the Nation wherein they dwell; for as the posterity of the righteous shall be blessed, so likewise the posterity of the unrighteous blasted or cursed the *Righteous God judgeth righteously*; It must not be supposed that God will shew his revenging wrath in a future World, on the posterity of unrighteous parents, for that is contradicted in the holy Scriptures, in disowning that *Adage* of old, *The Fathers have eaten Sower Grapes, and the Childrens Teeth are set on Edge.* No, not so, *The soul that sinneth it shall dye.* As *Job* or *Daniel* cannot by their Righteousness save Son or Daughter, so unrighteous parents cannot by their unrighteousness destroy Son or Daughter; for if the Son seeth the unrighteousness of the Father, and considereth of his Fathers wayes, and turneth

his feet from his Fathers violent dealing, it is no otherwise then consistent with the Divine Judgement and mercy to save such a Son alive, tho the Father dye, that is, the Second death; but this respects another world. In this world it's frequently nay, most commonly otherwise, for God herein *Pisseth the Iniquity of the Fathers upon their Children to the third and fourth Generation*; That has helped to this World, for though God threatened to cut off even him that Pisseth against the Wall of *Ababs* house, yet none can suppose this cutting off to import more then an infliction of temporal punishment on such a person, the more perspicuously thereby to manifest Gods wrath against *Abab*, and the glorious declaration of Gods vindictive Justice against such like Rebels, against the Majesty of Heaven: for God doth to clear his Justice and Righteousness oft in the sight of Men in not suffering even the offspring of unrighteousness and Injurious persons to pass without the effect of vindictive Justice; But oh to what ruin and desolation doth injury and oppression bring a Nation! Sin brings a People and a family low; Sin doth lead to the overthrow and ruin of States and Governments; Sin is the very shame of a People and Nation; Sin brings down Gods Judgments upon a Nation; God punisheth Lands for the Sins of the Inhabitants thereof.

§. 18. By acting injuriously and unrighteously, what an intolerable shame are persons so acting to Christianity, seeing they profess themselves professytes

sclytes thereunto, which if they do, let them consider the reproach they bring upon Christianity. Since Christians are by the precepts of their Master enjoyn'd to higher duties of Charity : but by injustice and oppression, do instead of living in the practice of them, absolutely unlearn even those common rules of Justice which nature it self instructs us in. *St. Paul* reproves those of the *Circumcission* very aptly on this occasion, when he said that *The name of God was Blasphemed among the Gentiles*, for there was a great unagreeableness between their practice and their Law : the Law under which they lived was straight and good, but their practices were loose and bad. But alas, how is the name of God still blasphemed by occasion of the evil and licentious practices of converted *Gentiles* ; how do the *Turks* and *Infidels* speak evil of Christianity for the sake of the evil practices of the professors thereof ? Therefore either let Christians walk according to the rules of Justice and Right, or else cease to be called by that most Excellent name ; let them endeavour to wipe off the Scandal and reproach which Injustice has brought by their means upon Christianity it self, which is purely immaculate, and a law of the strictest Justice and integrity.

§. 19. For men to act injuriously or with oppression against others, is bare-faced Robbery and against the common good of mankind. And this may be done several wayes, as by Power and Violence, by which many Nations and Princes have

been turned out of their Rights, and also many private men out of their Estates, and in their room have come Tyrants, Thiefs and Robbers: So if a man covets his Neighbours Lands or Goods, he pretends a claim to them, and then Endeavours to corrupt Justice by Bribes and Gifts, or else over-ruling it by greatness and Authority, gets Judgment on his side: this is indeed a high Oppression, and of the most black and dreadful sort, thus to make the Law, which is intended for the Protection and defence of men Rights, to be the means of Subverting and Destroying them; and it is a very heavy Guilt on every one that is concerned in such an act of Injustice, and sometimes the very Necessities of the Oppress'd are a means of his Oppression: thus it falls out in the case of Extortion, and griping usury: for a poor man to be in Extream want of Mony, and then for the Extortioner to take occasion inhumanly to Gripe and unconscionably to Extort, is most Barbarous Robbery and Injustice; and by how much more helpless the afflicted and oppressed Person is, by so much the more is the Guilt of the Oppressour increased.

And to conclude, Oppression and Injustice is indeed a most Crying Guilt, it Cryes up to Heaven for Vengeance; and the Cry thereof goeth into the hearing and Cognizance of Omnipotent power: And though God may seem to have Leaden Feet in the retribution of his Justice, yet Oppressors

for, shall certainly find that he hath Iron
 Hands. Let none be assur'd of it from Ex. 21.
 18. 12. He that hath oppress'd the Poor, and
 hath spoiled by Violence, He shall surely dye,
 his blood shall be upon Him: God hath so
 engag'd himself a Patron for the Poor and
 oppress'd, that he is in honour (as it were
 oblig'd) to defend them, and to judge their
 cause, and to avenge them, against all their
 unjust oppressors. We may clearly see
 God most Evidently engaging himself for
 them in Psalm. 12. 5. For the Oppression of
 the Poor, for the Sighing of the Needy, now
 will I arise, saith the Lord, I will set him in
 safety from him that putteth at him. The Op-
 pressour is not like to get much by engag-
 ing himself against God. Therefore let us
 follow the good and wholesome Advice of
 the Wise Man, viz, Rob not the Poor be-
 cause He is Poor, neither oppress the afflicted
 in the Gate, for the Lord will plead their Cause,
 and will spoil the Soul of those that spoileth
 them.

Wherefore seeing injustice and oppression
 are Sins of so high a Nature, and attend-
 ed with so dismal and grievous consequences,
 and

and effects, let us loath Injustice and live in the practice of Justice and Righteousness, for that will bring us comfort and Blessedness in the Latter end.

Let us endeavour after Negative Justice, which consisteth in doing no wrong or injury to any. A man is in several respects liable to receive injury: He may be injured in his Soul, in his Body, or in his Estate, or in his Credit, therefore Negative Justice lays a restriction upon us in respect of all these.

In respect of the Soul we must not act unjustly against the Soul of any Man, the Soul is the Essential part of Man, the Soul is the breath of God in Man, it is the most noble and excellent part. When we entice Men to sin, when we impose our own lusts and impieties upon them, then is the Soul wronged, and surely there can not be a greater wrong then to bring this great evil upon the Soul, for sin is the Disease and wound of the Soul, because it is contrary to the health and prosperity of it, which lyes in Grace, because it makes God desirable to our Souls, and our Souls acceptable to God.

God. Now thus do we wound and Maccerate the Souls of Men, when we draw them to Sin.

As we must not act injuriously against the Souls of any, so neither against their Bodies, for God doth strictly prohibit this in the Moral Law, when he saith, *Thou shalt do no Murder*. But of Murder there are several degrees, as false accusation, also by Endeavouring to make a Man Drunk, whereby he may have some Mischief done him, this is Murther; So is Anger, Hatred and Uncharitableness, as the Apostle saith, *He that loveth not his Brother is a Murtherer*, Now to act injustice against a Mans Body, is some degree of Murther, therefore let us not act unjustly against the Bodies of our Neighbours, for the Scripture saith, *No Murtherer shall inherit the Kingdom of God*.

And as we must not act injuriously against the Bodies of any Men, so neither against their estates, for this is the expresse sence of the tenth Commandment, *Thou shalt not Covet his Neighbours House, Nor his Wife, nor his Ox, nor his Ass, nor any thing that is his*.

And:

And as we must not act injuriously against Mens Estates, so neither must we by any means impair their Credit ; for a *Good name is better then precious oymment*, a good name is a tender thing in the eyes of a Man that enjoys it ; if by Back-biting and slander another takes it away, the person from whom it is taken may be injur'd even of his lively-hood in the World: therefore have our Laws for the good of mutual Society and common Security, in this Case, provided remedies, for Persons thus injur'd, by Actions, &c.

Let us endeavour after Positive Justice as well as after Negative, which Positive Justice is a yielding or giving to every Man that which by Right, and in point of Justice, he can challenge or demand of us; of these dues there are some general to all mankind, and others restrain'd to some Men of greater Condition and Quality, which becomes due to them by Virtue of such Qualifications. Sincerity of intention and mind is due to all mankind, even, as from the Lowest to the Highest, so from the highest to the lowest. A double mind is Odious to God and

and hateful to Men, *Speaking of lyes in by-
poerisy* is that which God abominates, and
is not either pleasing to or safe for Man:
even the most treacherous Villain esteemeth
an upright Man, and though through an
evil mind he will not act justly to o hers:
yet he would not that any should act un-
justly towards him.

Meekness and Gentleness is a Commu-
dity we owe to mankind, not to be of so
fullen and Churlish a Temper as we find
in holy writ Nabal was of, 1 Sam 25. 17.
Who was of such a base Temper that a
Man should not speak to Him. The pride of
Mans Nature is the greatest impediment to
this Vertue; but let Proud High Morose
Men Remember the words of our blessed
Saviour; He that exalteth Himself shall be
abased, and He that humbleth himself shall
be exalted.

There is a respect and honour due to
Men in regard of their Rank and Quality;
So Honour to whom Honour, Fear to whom
Fear, as saith the Apostle.

To the Poor though there is not that due
respect and honour which is to our betters,

yet there is *due* in humbleness of mind, a
 condescension, & pity; yet, nature instructs
 us, in that they are of the same mould with
 others, they should have Natural Pity,
*Prov. 3. 27. With-hold not good from him
 to whom it is due, when it is in the power of
 thine hand to do it; and say not to thy Neigh-
 bour, go and come again, and to Morrow I
 will give, when thou hast it by thee.*

We are also by positive Justice obliged
 to Gratitude: Ingratitude is an unnatural
 kind of bestialty; A man must divest him-
 self of humane Nature if he can not have
 a kind resentment of his benefactors boun-
 ty; which even the Publicans and Sinners
 (as saith our Saviour) did observe, when
 they do good to those that do good to
 them.

Many are the duties which are enjoyn-
 ed us by virtue of positive Justice towards
 our Neighbours, towards our Relations,
 towards our Magistrates; in respect of the
 whole course of our Life, but the sum of all
 which our Saviour calleth the Law and the
 Prophets, is, that we should do to men as
 we would that they should do to us;
 which

which is the true standard of Justice and Equity, and the unerring rule of all Right; which that we may walk according to that Rule, and that Peace may be upon us, let us also in Charity to others which may not follow this Rule, Pray with our Church, That it may please thee to bring into the way of Truth, all such as have erred and are deceived.

T H E E N D.
